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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2640
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
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SUBJECT: SENIOR MFA OFFICIAL LAMENTS MILITARY'S "CONTROL"
OF FOREIGN POLICY

REF: ANKARA 1244

Classified By: PolCouns Janice G. Weiner for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: A senior MFA official who works on Iraqi issues (not the same official cited reftel) lamented to us June 15 that the military is using the PKK issue to direct both Turkey's Iraq policy and the domestic political situation. He believes the usual balance between civilian and military authorities has been ruptured, and he personally fears that a cross-border operation (CBO)-- including potentially one that may be designed to hurt Barzani, not just the PKK -- could be in the offing. End summary.

¶2. (C) This official asserted that the military is using its standing as the Turkey's most respected institution to -- as he termed it -- mislead Turks into believing that the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) is threatening traditional Turkish secularism. In his view, the military is using this, along with PKK terrorism, to fear-monger. Our contact -- a worldly career diplomat who has told us that he detests AKP insider and foreign policy advisor Ahmet Davutoglu, but who also admires FonMin Gul as a rational thinker and foreign policy manager -- asserts that he has heard from many journalists that the military's approach is succeeding and AKP is losing votes in the Anatolian heartland. In his view the outcome of July 22 elections may well be a Republican People's Party (CHP) - National Action Party (MHP) coalition government, which he believes would be a "disaster for you and for us," especially vis-a-vis Iraq.

¶3. (C) Our contact opined that only U.S. action against the PKK in northern Iraq could avert a CBO as well as turn the tables in favor of AKP and ensure a continuation of a rational Iraq policy. He added that he could not understand why Barzani (i.e., the KRG) was so unwilling to help on the PKK issue, since a CHP-MHP coalition (i.e., a nationalist, strongly anti-Kurd and anti-U.S. government) can only hurt his interests.

¶4. (C) While this represents one person's view, it is surprising that an MFA official would so baldly state his concerns to us, though naturally it may also have been calculated to spur us to action on the PKK. His concern appeared genuine, and he implied it was shared at many levels

in the Ministry, including at the top. He appeared particularly vexed at "the state's" inability to deal with taboos such as full acceptance of Turkey's Kurdish population. He noted that he had just returned from an official visit to Iran. Apparently during a tour of a major museum in Tehran, the Iranian tour guide pointed out antiquities "from our Kurdistan region." He wondered why such a phrase was acceptable in an authoritarian state such as Iran, but not in a democracy like Turkey.

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